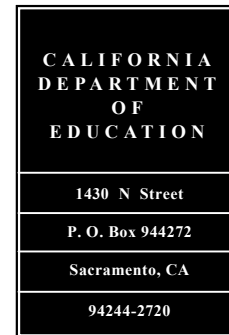




JACK O'CONNELL
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



August 20, 2003

Dear County and District Superintendents:

**STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY ON
NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND PARAPROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

At the June 2003 meeting, the State Board of Education (SBE) took action on California's implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements for paraprofessionals who assist in instructing in Title I programs. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, Section 1119(c) and (d) requires that local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving Title I funds ensure that Title I paraprofessionals whose duties include instructional support and who were hired after January 8, 2002, shall have:

1. Completed two years of study at an institution of higher education;
2. Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
3. Met a rigorous standard of quality and be able to demonstrate, through a formal state or local academic assessment, knowledge of and the ability to assist in instructing reading, writing, and mathematics (or, as appropriate, reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness).

LEAs receiving Title I funds shall also ensure that paraprofessionals, hired on or before January 8, 2002, and working in a program supported with Title I funds, must meet these requirements by January 8, 2006. All Title I paraprofessionals must have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent.

SBE clarified the following issues related to meeting the NCLB paraprofessional requirements:

“‘Two years of study’ is defined for California LEAs as 48 semester units. The coursework for either an associate's degree or for two years of study at an institution of higher education (IHE) may be determined by each LEA.”

To meet the third option of demonstrating knowledge and ability to assist in instruction, the development or selection of an assessment is determined by each LEA. In addition, SBE decided that each LEA may determine whether or not to accept another LEA's assessment results for determining a paraprofessional's qualifications.

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For additional information regarding NCLB, please visit the California Department of Education's NCLB Web site <www.cde.ca.gov/pr/nclb>.

If you have questions regarding this letter, please contact Penni Hansen, Consultant,

Professional Development and Curriculum Support Division at (916) 323-5472 or via e-mail at <phansen@cde.ca.gov>.

Sincerely,

JACK O'CONNELL

JO:ph